FACT SHEET: changes to the urban growth boundary

The Victorian Government has recently released a plan to manage the development of Melbourne’s five ‘growth areas’ – Casey-Cardinia, Hume, Melton-Caroline Springs, Whittlesea and Wyndham.

A plan for Melbourne’s growth areas recognises that we have to plan ahead so our newest communities will be well-designed and have the facilities and services they need.

To support the plan the government is:

- releasing enough new land to protect housing affordability and to create more job opportunities over the next 25 years and beyond

- establishing a new Growth Areas Authority that will support councils, developers and the community to ensure new neighbourhoods are properly planned and that new communities receive the services and infrastructure they need sooner

- adopting a new partnership approach to infrastructure provision that builds on existing arrangements and ensures that all developments provide a fair contribution towards the provision of infrastructure

WHAT IS THE URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY?

The government introduced an interim urban growth boundary in 2002 as a tool to help manage outward growth.

The boundary clearly defines where development can and cannot occur, protecting Melbourne’s highly valued open spaces, farming, conservation and recreation areas.

WHY HAS THE URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY CHANGED?

When the interim urban growth boundary was introduced, the government advised that the location of the boundary around the five growth areas would be subject to review in light of growth area development needs in the longer term. The Smart Growth Committees carried out the review during 2004-05.

In light of the advice from these committees regarding future development, and recognising the government’s commitment to maintain a 15-year minimum land supply for housing and industrial development, the Minister for Planning has approved amendments to the urban growth boundary which will be presented to Parliament for ratification.

Based on the current State Government population projections, these changes will provide enough land within the urban growth boundary in each growth area for around 25 years of development.

This will provide certainty and a firmer basis for long-term planning for sustainable growth. It will also avoid the need for additional changes in the short term and help ensure future market competition and downward pressure on prices.

Melbourne 2030 objectives are to locate more new households in the established metropolitan area and see greater housing yields and choice in new developments in growth areas. In this case, land within the urban growth boundary will last significantly longer.

These changes strike a sensible balance between managing growth, protecting the environment and ensuring the home building industry continues to provide competitively priced affordable housing.
WHAT CHANGES ARE BEING MADE TO THE URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY?

The urban growth boundary changes are detailed in the planning scheme amendments approved by the Minister for Planning in November 2005. An explanatory report provides information about each of the amendments, and amendment maps define the precise urban growth boundary.

HOW WILL FUTURE CHANGES BE DETERMINED IN GROWTH AREAS?

The changes now presented provide for at least 25 years of future growth which will avoid the need for changes in the short term. The new Growth Areas Authority will provide advice regarding the need for any future changes. Any future urban growth boundary changes will continue to require ratification by both Houses of Parliament.

HOW WILL THE GOVERNMENT MONITOR THE SUPPLY OF LAND?

The government will monitor the supply and demand for residential and industrial land on an ongoing basis, to enable a review of the impact on land supply of any future shifts in anticipated housing demand.

The government’s Urban Development Program, which reports annually after consultation with the development industry and local government, will continue to provide a detailed annual assessment of land supply and demand.

where can I see a map of the new urban growth boundary?

The approval of change to the urban growth boundary is a three step process. Any amendment to the urban growth boundary requires the approval of the Minister for Planning and once approved by the Minister the ratification of both Houses of Parliament. The amendments are then listed for gazettal in the Government Gazette.

The approved amendments do not take effect until they are ratified by Parliament. Once the notice of ratification is published in the Government Gazette copies of the amendments will be available online at www.dse.vic.gov.au/planningschemes. Copies will also be available to view at:

- Planning counters at growth area council offices in Casey, Cardinia, Hume, Melton, Whittlesea and Wyndham
- DSE Port Phillip Regional Office, 30 Prospect Street, Box Hill Vic 3128
- Planning Information Centre, ground floor, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne Vic 3002

Further information

Copies of A plan for Melbourne’s growth areas and Fact Sheets can be downloaded from www.dse.vic.gov.au/growthareas, or free call the Department of Sustainability and Environment’s Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

The Victorian Government is releasing more land to keep home ownership affordable for families in Melbourne’s fastest growing areas.

The release of land for housing and new industry is supported by a plan that replaces the ad hoc approach to development that has left some communities isolated and without access to the basic services they need.

A plan for Melbourne’s Growth Areas helps to ensure that all new developments will be well thought-out communities closer to shops, schools, health services, jobs and transport. They will be environmentally sustainable, healthy places to live.